

Board Policy on Equity and Excellence

The Academy recognizes and acknowledges the historical underrepresentation and marginalization of culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse groups, both universally, and particularly, in STEM education and professions. These disparities also exist in the representation of the Academy's workforce. We are committed to advancing equity in STEM education and representation and creating a diverse, inclusive community of global citizens who can realize their full potential, and execute our mission to advance the human condition, through a model of Equity and Excellence.

This Equity and Excellence Model is the intentional integration of Cultural Competence, Diversity, Equity, Equity-Minded Frame, Excellence and Inclusion into every facet of the Academy, with the understanding that it is an active and ongoing process involving structures, processes and people and not an isolated initiative.

Definitions

Cultural Competence:

Demonstrating value for, and relating to, one's own and others' cultural identity (e.g., language, heritage, and experiences); effectively communicating and collaborating with diverse individuals and groups; applying positive strategies to address social injustices; and instruction and interaction that allow CLED and Marginalized groups to maintain the integrity of their cultural identity, while succeeding academically, socially-emotionally and/or professionally.

Culturally, Linguistically, and Economically Diverse:

The historically underrepresented populations at IMSA (Black, Latinx, rural, low-socioeconomic status).

Diversity:

Individual differences (e.g. personality, learning styles, and life experiences) and group/social differences (e.g. race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, country of origin, and ability as well as cultural, political, religious, or other affiliations) that can be engaged in the service of teaching, learning and advancing the human condition. Additionally, it includes tracking the numerical and proportional representation of various racial and ethnic groups among students and employees.

Equity:

Access for Culturally, Linguistically and Economically Diverse and Marginalized students to differentiated academic and social-emotional supports and interventions that create opportunity for them to participate in educational programs and co-curricular activities that are capable of

closing the excellence gaps in student experiences, success and retention. Additionally, with respect to the Academy's workforce, Equity means differentiated strategies and resources to attract, retain and professionally develop Culturally, Linguistically and Economically Diverse and Marginalized applicants and employees.

Equity-Minded Frame:

The data-driven outlook and perspectives that call attention to patterns of inequity in access, outcomes and retention as institutional problems, in an effort to develop systemic strategies within the control of the Academy that address these inequities. This includes being willing to have robust discussions about identity-based inequities.

Excellence:

The expectation and standard that whatever the Academy does in teaching and learning, research, innovation, student and workforce development, institutional functioning, and participation in local and global communities, is of the highest quality, is on the cutting edge, rigorous, nourishes critical and creative thinking, is responsive to stakeholders and advances equity.

Inclusion:

A proactive, intentional and ongoing fostering and nurturing of a safe, affirming and responsive environment and organizational culture where students and staff, including faculty, feel they have value, the opportunity to contribute their best work and the ability to realize their full potential. This results from the choices we make individually, and collectively, to create a climate and culture where Diversity is not simply tolerated, but encouraged.

Marginalized:

Those groups who traditionally lack access to rights, resources, and opportunities, and are often socially excluded, including, but not limited to, LGBTQIA+, undocumented, female, and twice-exceptional.

Therefore, the Academy shall pursue Equity and Excellence by:

1. Developing and using an equity lens when considering major policies, programs, practices, or decisions in order to realize more equitable outcomes.
2. Implementing strategies based on the Equity and Excellence Model to recruit, support and retain staff, including faculty, as well as board members and external partners.
3. Providing professional learning that continuously develops the Cultural Competence and equity awareness of staff, including faculty, as well as board members and external partners.

4. Supporting research, scholarship and innovative expression of staff, including faculty as well as external partners that either address or promote the Equity and Excellence Model.
5. Implementing strategies to recruit, support and retain Culturally, Linguistically and Economically Diverse groups and support and retain Marginalized groups.
6. Differentiating resources as necessary to provide every student with access to Culturally Competent pedagogy, curriculum, co-curriculum, support, facilities and other educational resources with an ultimate goal of achieving Excellence.
7. Addressing Culturally, Linguistically and Economically Diverse and gender-based STEM education/career gaps by developing student and professional programs and services, as well as conducting research, that will inform strengthening and diversifying the STEM education to career pipeline.

The President, in collaboration with Academy departments, shall develop action plans with clear accountabilities and metrics, where appropriate, to execute this policy. Updated action plans and progress shall be reported to the board at least once each academic year, or more frequently as the President otherwise deems appropriate.